

## Best companies for Bay Area commuters named

Business software rivals Oracle Corp., of Redwood Shores, and PeopleSoft Inc., of Pleasanton, may not seem to agree on much of anything in their fierce battle swirling around Oracle's hostile takeover offer, but they're bedfellows in one area at least. They're among 103 Bay Area companies named Thursday as "best workplaces for commuters."

The Bay Area's Best Workplaces for Commuters Coalition says the 103 employers with a combined 188,000 workers are "committed to improving quality of life for employees, while at the same time helping to reduce traffic and air pollution."

"The average annual Bay Area traffic delay per capita for 2001 was 42 hours compared to 26 hours nationally, which in addition to the added pollution and frustration, also produces \$3.4 billion in congestion costs -- that's \$835 per person," says Robin Snyder, program manager for the recognition program.

To be on the list, organizations must provide:

- at least one primary commuter benefit, which can include a monthly transit/vanpool pass subsidy, cash in lieu of free parking, or a significant telecommuting program;
- at least three supporting commuter benefits, which can include carpool/vanpool incentives, lockers/showers for bikers or walkers, incentives for living near work, or on-site amenities such as day care or dry cleaning;
- a central point of contact for information, someone who actively informs employees of available commuter benefits; and
- access to a regional or employer-provided emergency/guaranteed ride home program.

"It's no surprise that almost 70 percent of the Bay Area's carbon monoxide comes from motor vehicles, since more than 3.3 million people commute each day in the Bay Area and more than 70 percent of them drive to work alone," says Michael Cunningham, vice president of the Bay Area Council. "With more and more employers in the Bay Area recognizing the importance of offering commuter benefits, at the end of the day fewer cars on the road mean less stress for employees and a cleaner and healthier Bay Area."

The Bay Area's Best Workplaces for Commuters Coalition members include the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, the Bay Area Council, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Northern California Chapter of the Association for Commuter Transportation, the Northern California Human Resources Association, RIDES for Bay Area Commuters Inc., the Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.